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December is AIDS
awareness month



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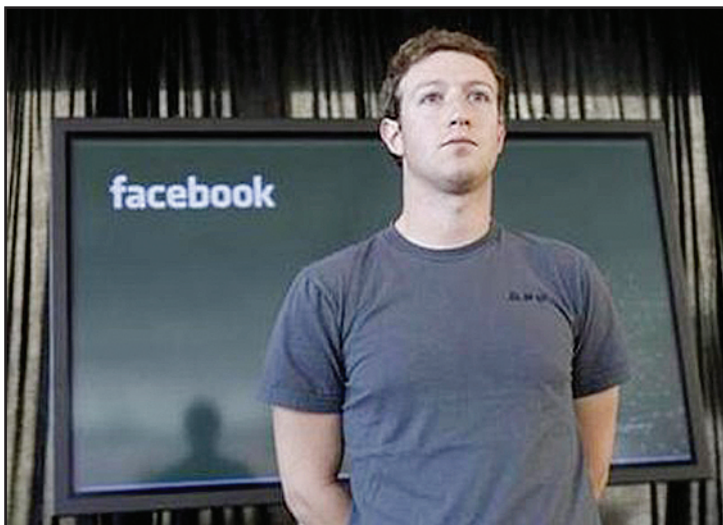
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Minister Oduber praises retirees and anniversary celebrants



See story on page 3

Facebook founder named Time's 'person of year'



NEW YORK (AFP) – Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg yesterday beat WikiLeaks chief Julian Assange to be crowned Time magazine's "person of the year" -- even though the weekly's own readers thought it should be the other way around.

Zuckerberg, only 26, is the second youngest person named to the cover of Time's ritual annual issue.

Managing editor Richard Stengel said Zuckerberg's social networking service was "transforming the way we live our lives every day."

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MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

Empty chair for Cuba's Sakharov prize-winner



STRASBOURG, France (AFP) - An empty chair draped in a Cuban flag symbolised Havana's refusal to allow dissident Guillermo Farinas to pick up his prestigious Sakharov rights

prize yesterday, in an echo of last week's Nobel award. In a recorded message to the European Parliament which gave him the award, left standing on the empty chair, Farinas signed off as "a psychologist, librarian, independent journalist, three-time political prisoner."

"I accept the prize," he said, "because I feel I am a tiny part of the rebellious spirit of this people I am proud to belong to."

The statement, in which the 48-

year-old dissident repeatedly slammed the Cuban regime as "totalitarian", "autocratic" and "savage", brought the more than 700 members of the parliament to their feet in re-

sounding applause.

"This empty chair," said parliament president Jerzy Buzek, "demonstrates just how much this award was necessary."

But the former Polish premier said there was hope for Cuba in the history of eastern Europe. "History repeats itself. In my country everything changed, and that is a reason to be optimistic."

"Our community of democratic nations today send a strong signal to Cuba," he said.

Farinas, who was unable to travel to the French city that houses the parliament when authorities failed to deliver an exit visa, urged Europeans to fight for the release of Cuba's political prisoners, help end anti-opposition attacks and call for the creation of opposition parties and trade unions.

"My biggest hopes is that you will not let yourselves be fooled by the siren song of a cruel regime of savage communism," Farinas said in his message.

He also urged Europe to maintain a so-called 1996 "common position" binding political dialogue with Cuba to its respect for human rights.

Brazil opens Niemeyer museum as he turns 103

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AFP) - Legendary Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer marked his 103rd birthday yesterday with a gift too big to be wrapped with a bow: a museum bearing his name and dedicated to his illustrious career.

"My friends have come to see me. How nice," he told reporters at a reception unveiling the Oscar Niemeyer Foundation in nearby Niteroi.

The modern city 14 kilometers (eight miles) outside Rio de Janeiro, is already brim-

UN: International panel to investigate Haiti cholera

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - The United Nations is to name an international panel to investigate Haiti's cholera epidemic which many in the Caribbean nation have blamed on Nepalese peacekeepers, a top official said yesterday.

Alain LeRoy, head of the UN peacekeeping department, said the UN had asked the World Health Organization to find the best experts to pinpoint the source of the epidemic which has killed at least 2,200 people and caused anti-UN riots in the impoverished nation.

"The source of this outbreak has been critically important for us," LeRoy told reporters, insisting that the UN mission in Haiti, MINUSTAH, has been "totally transparent" over the cholera source.

"There have been multiple reports," he said. "There has been no consensus among the scientists."

One top French epidemiologist has said the Nepalese camp at Mirebalais in central Haiti was the source of the outbreak. Other experts have said the strain was of South Asian origin.

LeRoy said other experts had speculated that weather

conditions could be to blame, or that the bacteria had been laying dormant for many years.

He said that the UN mission, the Haitian government and other experts had tested water in the river near the Nepalese base as well as water in the camp and soldiers.

"All the tests have been negative so far. I say 'so far' because we keep testing," LeRoy said, adding: "Despite our tests there are still suspicions and rumours."

"We are calling for an international panel. We are in discussions with the WHO to find the best experts to be in a completely independent panel, which will review, with the best investigation, the source of the outbreak."

LeRoy stressed that the probe would be "fully transparent" and that investigators would have "full access" to the base.

Dutch queen's childhood drawings sell for 16,750 euros

THE HAGUE, The Netherlands -- Six drawings by Dutch Queen Beatrix when she was a girl sold in auction in Amsterdam yesterday for 16,750 euros, auction house Christie's announced.

"The drawings are not dated," Christie's spokesman Maarten van Gijn told AFP. Their quality suggested they were made when she was 10 or 12 years old, he said. The popular queen is now aged 72.

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Vending permits for Carnaval 2011

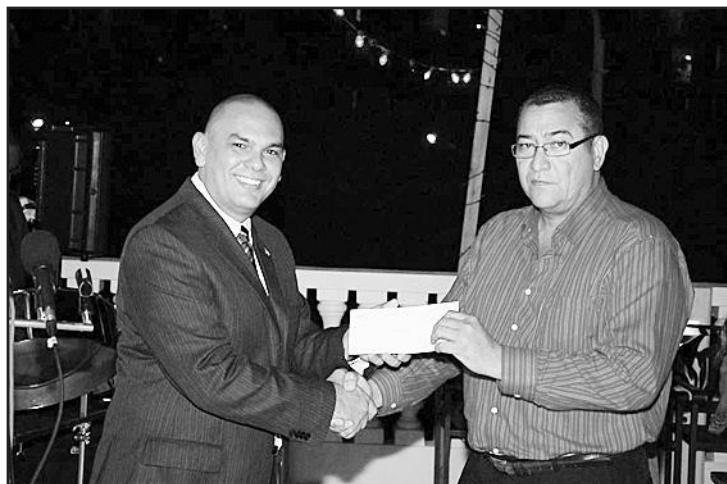


The Aruba Police announces to the general public that everyone who wishes to file for a vending permit to sell merchandise along the Carnaval routes, such as sweets, umbrellas, color sprays, kerchiefs, etc, can now obtain the application forms beginning December 20, 2010. is the last day to file for a vending permit is February 18, 2011.

Applicants filing for a permit must go to the House of Justice at Macuarima and ask for Mrs. Isolda Mathilda.

The Aruba Police remind all interested parties to get your permit on time and to always keep it on hand.

Minister Oduber Praises Retirees and Anniversary Celebrants



Fourteen employees who reached retirement age or who celebrated 30 plus years of employment were invited by minister Oduber to celebrate the occasion with their family at the Centro di Pesca Hadicurari.

The minister of Labor has chosen to rather than congratulate employees individually as is the tradition, to instead organize a festive occasion twice a year to recognize all employees who have reached a milestone in their careers. He believes that such an occasion is much more significant for celebrating employees. Employees from the departments under his watch come together for these festive occasions, creating harmony among employees and the opportunity for getting to know each other and the celebrating employees' work history.

Oduber congratulated the 14 employees for their contribution to the development of Aruba as he reviewed their interesting history of long and dedicated service. The 14 employees reacted with praise and appreciation for the minister's kind attention.

Among them were those going on pension: Beatriz van der Linde-Ras, Harold Tromp, Ruben Maduro, Hendrik Ras; and for 30 years of service: Luis van de Linden, Leen Stattia, Erwin Dane, Judith Rasmijn, Lucille de Kort, Mariano van der Linde, Mario van der Linde, Siegfried Thiel, Luis van der Linden, and for 35 years of service Jessey Peterson.

Vacature

SETAR N.V. is het Arubaanse telecommunicatiebedrijf dat een totaal pakket van telecommunicatievoorzieningen en de infrastructuur hiervoor beheert. Als gevolg van de groei van onze activiteiten, zijn wij ter versterking van ons team op zoek naar jonge, enthousiaste en dynamische medewerkers voor de volgende functies:

APPLICATIEBEHEERDER – MOBILE APPS

Als Applicatiebeheerder belast met mobiele systeemontwikkeling ben je verantwoordelijk voor het ontwikkelen en het correct laten functioneren van de onder jou vallende applicaties. Bovendien onderhoud je de relatie met de betreffende leveranciers en ondersteun je de product-eigenaren en eindgebruikers van deze applicatie. Je werkt in een team van medewerkers die van communicatietechnologie houden en geboeid blijven door IT-innovaties.

Als applicatiebeheerder houd je je bij ons o.a. bezig met de volgende taken:

- het in kaart brengen van wensen en eisen van eindgebruikers en het van daaruit tot een aanpassing van het functioneel ontwerp komen
- het analyseren, ontwerpen en bouwen van maatwerkapplicaties draaiend op de meest gangbare mobiele platformen (zoals Blackberry, Android, Apple) en het bouwen van interfaces tussen de verschillende Billingplatformen van SETAR en een verscheidenheid van netwerkelementen
- het opstellen van verbeteringsvoorstellen n.a.v. gebruikerswensenlijsten, inclusief het opstellen van kosten/baten van de wijziging en impactanalyse m.b.t. het proces en organisatie
- het rapporteren van systeemincidenten overeenkomstig de Service Level Agreements met de leveranciers en regulier voortgangsoverleg hierover met de leveranciers
- het ondersteunen van test- en bouwwerkzaamheden, conversie en het geven van cursussen.

Functievereisten:

- Minimaal H.B.O. diploma
- Kennis van netwerken, interfaces, protocollen en services
- Kennis en aantoonbare ervaring in de ontwikkeltools en omgevingen zoals C#, Java, Javascript, HTML, PHP
- Ervaring met Unix (HP of Sun genieten de voorkeur)
- Kennis van informatievoorziening en automatisering
- Analytische vaardigheid voor het analyseren/oplossen van verbeteringen en productiestoringen
- Kennis van een projectmatige aanpak van systeemaanpassingen.

APPLICATIEBEHEERDER - WEB APPS

Functie-inhoud

Als Web Applications Developer ben je primair verantwoordelijk voor het ontwikkelen, beheren en onderhouden van de corporate websites. Als webdeveloper werk je samen met de marketing medewerkers, technisch- en grafisch designers aan verschillende online diensten evenals websites voor externe klanten.

Tot de taken van de aan te stellen Web Applications Developer zullen onder meer behoren:

- het zelfstandig ontwikkelen van nieuwe applicaties, interfaces naar verschillende systemen en het aanpassen van bestaande online diensten
- het doen van voorstellen voor het verbeteren van bestaande applicaties en architectuur en het schrijven van documentatie
- het zelfstandig ontwikkelen van nieuwe online diensten in PHP en ASP
- het onderhouden en aanpassen van de bestaande applicaties in PHP
- het initiëren van verbeteringstrajecten.

Functie-eisen

- Minimaal HBO diploma
- Tenminste twee jaren ervaring in soortgelijke functie
- Minimaal één (1) jaar ervaring met ontwikkeling in PHP
- Ruime kennis van PHP, JSP, ASP, HTML, Javascript, DHTML/CSS, XML en Ajax
- Kennis en ervaring met Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash en DreamWeaver en het ontwikkelen van webapplicaties conform W3C-standaarden
- Kennis van MySQL en SQL en (diverse) Open source omgevingen
- Systeembeheer kennis op Unix/Linux niveau is vereist voor het aandragen van oplossingen samen met systeembeheerders

APPLICATIE BEHEERDER - CRM

Als Applicatiebeheerder belast met CRM, ben je verantwoordelijk voor het ontwikkelen en correct laten functioneren van de onder jou vallende applicaties. Bovendien onderhoud je de relatie met de betreffende leveranciers en ondersteun je de product-eigenaren en eindgebruikers van deze applicatie. Je werkt in een team van medewerkers die van communicatietechnologie houden en geboeid blijven door IT-innovaties.

De Taken:

Als Applicatie beheerder CRM ben je een aanwinst voor ons bouw/applicatieteam. Je houdt je bezig met het ontwerpen, bouwen en integreren van complexe applicaties. Samen met het ontwikkelteam vertaal je de behoeften van de eindgebruikers tot ontwerp, oplossing en implementatie van de architectuur. De talloze mogelijkheden van Siebel ken jij als geen ander. Je fungeert dan ook als vraagbaak en coacht waar mogelijk minder ervaren collega's bij het gebruik en inrichten van de applicatie.

Functie-eisen

- Minimaal HBO diploma
- Bedrijfskundig, technisch en organisatiekundig inzicht
- Kennis van Oracle Siebel Tools is aan te bevelen.
- Analytische vaardigheid voor het oplossen van productiestoring.
- Kennis van de processen/procedures bij incidenten, problemen en wijzigingen (IPW).
- Kennis van de projectmatige aanpak van systeemaanpassingen.

Voor alle functies is het vereist dat je over de volgende competenties beschikt:

- Affiniteit met het werkveld van de te beheren applicatie
- Een innovatieve en ondernemende instelling
- Goede communicatieve en schriftelijke vaardigheden
- Sociale vaardigheden voor het begeleiden, overleggen en afstemmen
- Een flexibele instelling en werkhouding
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Interesse:

U wordt verzocht om uw sollicitatiebrief met uw curriculum uiterlijk 29 december 2010 te richten aan Mevr. Sonia A. Damian, Human Resources Manager, Seroe Blanco 29-A of sturen via e-mail adres: sonia.damian@setar.aw

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At a recent rooftop gathering, at the 9th floor penthouse suite of the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa, members of Deloitte Aruba, celebrated the holiday in community, over premium bar and delicious holiday favorites prepared by the resort culinary brigade.

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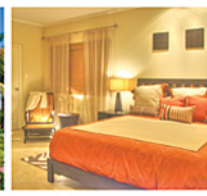


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UAE hotel erects 11-million-dollar Christmas tree



ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AFP) - Christmas came in extravagant fashion to the Muslim desert emirate of Abu Dhabi as a glitzy hotel unveiled a bejewelled Christmas tree valued at more than 11 million dollars on Wednesday.

It is the "most expensive Christmas tree ever," with a "value of over 11 million dollars," said Hans Olbertz, general manager of Emirates Palace hotel, at its inauguration.

The 13-metre (40-foot) faux evergreen, located in the gold leaf-bedecked rotunda of the hotel, is decorated with silver and gold bows, ball-shaped ornaments and small white lights.

But the necklaces, earrings and other jewellery draped around the tree's branches are what give it a record value.

It holds a total of 181 diamonds, pearls, emeralds, sapphires and other precious stones, said Khalifa Khouri, owner of Style Gallery, which provided the jewellery.

"The tree itself is about 10,000 dollars," Olbertz said. "The jewellery has a value of over 11 million dollars -- I

think 11.4, 11.5."

This will probably be an entry into the Guinness book of world records, Olbertz said, adding that Emirates Palace planned to contact the organisation about the tree which is to stay until the end of the year.

Asked if the tree might offend religious sensibilities in the United Arab Emirates, where the vast majority of the local population is Muslim, Olbertz said he did not think it would. "It's a very liberal country," he said.

The hotel has had a Christmas tree up in previous years, but this year "we said we have to do something different," and the hotel's marketing team hatched the plan, said Olbertz.

The tree is not the first extravagant offering from Emirates Palace -- a massive, dome-topped hotel sitting amid fountains and carefully



manicured lawns.

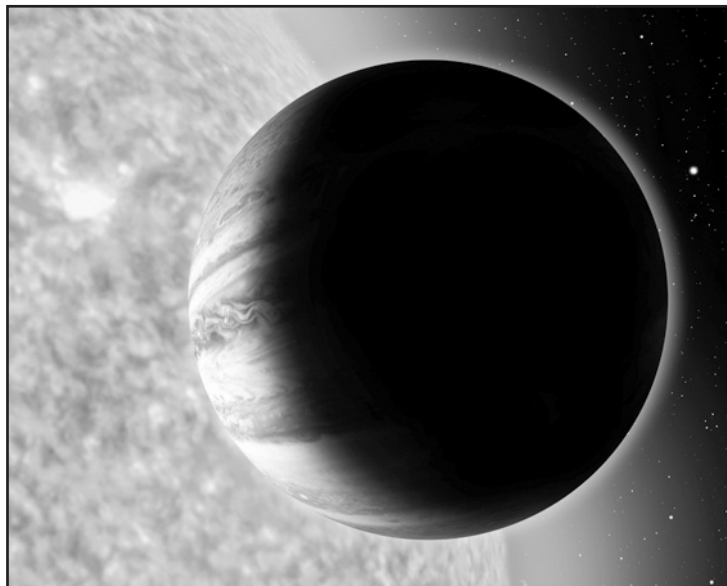
The hotel, which bills itself as seven-star, in February introduced a package for a seven-day stay priced at one million dollars.

Takers of the package have a private butler and a chauffeur driven Maybach luxury car at their disposal during their stay, as well as a private jet available for trips to other countries in the region.

And in May, the hotel opened a gold vending machine, becoming the first place outside Germany to install "gold to go, the world's first gold vending machine," said Ex Oriente Lux AG, the German company behind the machine.

Sci-Tech

Qatar-led team finds its first alien world



A handout made available by the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development on December shows an artists rendering of the newly discovered Qatar-1b planet. (AFP)

DOHA (AFP) - A Qatar-led international team has made its first find in its search for planets orbiting distant stars -- a huge gas giant 20 percent larger than Jupiter that orbits a star 500 light years away.

The planet has been named Qatar-1b and its discovery is to be reported in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society, the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Develop-

ment said on Wednesday.

Working in collaboration with astronomers in Britain and the United States, and using data collected by Qatar's wide-angle cameras in the US state of New Mexico, the team were able to identify the planet from the dip in light from the parent star as its orbit took it between the star and Earth.

The team had to use computers to sift through data from hundreds of thousands of stars before making their

lucky find.

"The discovery of Qatar-1b is a great achievement -- one that further demonstrates Qatar's commitment to becoming a leader in innovative science and research," said Dr Khalid Al Subai, leader of the Qatar exoplanet survey and a research director at the foundation.

"Qatar is proud to contribute to the search for planets around other stars." Qatar-1b orbits just 3.5 million kilometres from its parent star and roasts at a temperature of around 1100 degrees Celsius.

Professor Keith Horne of St Andrews University in Scotland which collaborated in the research said that using the same technology the team hoped eventually to find planets more similar to our own.

"Qatar-1b is just the beginning," Horne said. "With Qatar's new planet-hunting cameras, we should soon be finding smaller planets as well, hot Saturns and hot Neptunes, and ultimately, with a different technique, cool Earths."

Qatar-1b circles its star once every 1.4 days, meaning that its "year" is just 34 hours long. It also spins on its axis once every 34 hours as it is expected to be tidally locked with its star, such that one side of the planet always faces the star.

Scientists at the Universities of Leicester and Keele in England and the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in the United States also collaborated in the research.

Scientists identify murdered French king

PARIS (AFP) - He was one of France's most adored kings, a monarch known as "le bon roi Henri" (good king Henri), who promoted religious tolerance, was a hit with the ladies and was the first to dream of putting a chicken in every pot.

Alas for Henri IV: on May 14 1610, at the age of 57, his life was cut brutally short by a Catholic fanatic who waylaid him during a procession and slashed him twice in the throat.

Then, during the French Revolution, came a second ignominy.

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NASA's arsenic-eating life form gets a second look

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Soon after NASA-funded researchers announced this month they had found a new life form that thrives on arsenic, critics took to the blogosphere with skeptical views and downright insults. "I don't know whether the authors are just bad scientists or whether they're unscrupulously pushing NASA's 'There's life in outer space!' agenda," wrote Canadian microbiologist Rosie Redfield in a blog that ignited the web furor.

The criticism spread with lightning speed, sparking a wide debate over what exactly is in the alleged arsenic-eater's DNA, but also what role bloggers should play in a field long dominated by peer-reviewed journals.

And resolution may be months or years away, as scientists wait to obtain samples of the same bacteria to try and replicate the findings led by Felisa Wolfe-Simon and published December 2 in the prestigious journal Science.

The journal's editors have "received about 20 technical comments and letters responding to the article," the magazine said in a statement sent to AFP on Tuesday.

"Responses will undergo review, and Wolfe-Simon's team will then be asked to formally address their peers' questions in a future edition of Science," it said.

"It is hoped that the paper-responses and the authors' replies can be published in January 2011."

Wolfe-Simon and NASA have declined to respond directly to media queries asking for a response to the critics, but she did post a statement on her website saying she and colleagues "welcome lively debate."

"My research team and I are aware that our peer-reviewed Science article has generated some technical questions and challenges from within the scientific community," she wrote.

"Our manuscript was thoroughly reviewed and accepted for publication by Science; we presented our data and results and drew our conclusions based on what we showed. But we welcome lively debate since we recognize that scholarly discourse moves science forward."

She added that she and her colleagues were working on a list of "frequently asked questions" to help promote general understanding of our work.

Asked for further comment on Tuesday, study co-author Paul Davies at the University of Arizona told AFP he'd prefer to wait until the FAQs list is finished.

"It would make sense to hold off until we have a comprehensive picture," Davies said.

Sony Brings the Nex-3 and Nex-5 to India



Sony Corporation's Alpha division, presents the new NEX-5 Alpha series in Mumbai on December 15, 2010. Sony launched their World's smallest and lightest interchangeable lens digital camera. The Nex-3 and Nex-5 have interchangeable lenses and aim to aim to capture DSLR-quality photos at the size and weight of point-and-click digicams. Mr. K Teshirogi, Business Head, Alpha division, Sony Corporation had this to say. "For photographers who are averse to extensive manual controls on a camera, the NEX-5 and NEX-3 offer sleek form factor, as well as user-friendly settings. This allows them to capture professional quality photos effortlessly. For experienced photographers, lightweight NEX offers serious DSLR performance in a camera that they can easily carry with them at all times." (AFP PHOTO)

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Health & Living

More US youths smoking pot: survey

WASHINGTON, USA (AFP) — Marijuana consumption among American adolescents aged 13 to 18 rose again in 2010, the National Institute on Drug Abuse said in an annual report Tuesday.

The debate over the legalization of marijuana in states like California, which ended up rejecting it, had considerable impact on young people's perception of the drug, the report suggests.

The survey, titled "Monitoring the Future," was conducted among 46,000 students in the eighth grade (13 to 14 years old), 10th grade (15 to 16), and 12th grade (17 to 18).

It found that 6.1 percent of 12th grade students admitted to regularly using marijuana, an increase from 5.2 percent last year.

Students in 10th grade who reported using marijuana rose to 3.3 percent from 2.8 percent last year, while eighth grade users rose to 1.2 percent from one percent.

Responses to the survey were made anonymously.

"In front of us, we are see-

ing an increase in marijuana daily use, which is... the one that has the most adverse effects," Nora Volkow, the institute's director, said at a news conference.

"The information is particularly disturbing regarding youth use, particularly among eighth graders," said Gil Kerlikowske, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Kerlikowske, following a broad review of anti-drug policy, announced an ambitious goal in May of reducing marijuana consumption by youths by 15 percent in the next five years.

The goal will not be changed as a result of the latest survey findings, said Kerlikowske, whose office has asked for a 13 percent increase in prevention programs to nearly 640 million dollars in 2011.

He criticized the California campaign to legalize marijuana, which was debated for months before it was defeated in a referendum last month, as sending "a terrible message."

Brazil at risk of becoming 'obese': health minister

BRASILIA (AFP) — Brazil is at risk of becoming a country of obese citizens because of over-consumption of fatty foods and a sedentary lifestyle, Health Minister Jose Gomes Temporao warned Tuesday.

"We're sitting on a time bomb that could explode in the next 20 years," he said, according to media reports.

The rapidly expanding waistlines in Brazil means the country could overtake the United States in terms of excess weight and obesity in the next 12 years, he said.

Temporao said he had delivered a plan to the incoming government of president Dilma Rousseff, who takes charge next month, that includes a public awareness campaign to promote healthy living, and to get the food industry to cut sugar and salt levels in their products.

Stem cell transplant 'cures' HIV: study



WASHINGTON, USA (AFP) — A US cancer patient who received a stem cell transplant has been cured of HIV, said a team of German doctors whose research was published in the peer-reviewed journal Blood on Wednesday.

"Our results strongly suggest that cure of HIV has been achieved in this patient," said the study.

The results suggest the first such cure for the virus that causes AIDS, though experts caution it may not be safe or feasible for the wider population.

The subject of the study, an American in his 40s who is often referred to as the "Berlin patient," received a stem cell

transplant as treatment for acute myeloid leukemia in 2007.

The stem cells came from a donor with a rare gene mutation that makes it impossible to contract HIV.

The study showed no sign of HIV more than two years after the transplant, even though the patient had ceased anti-retroviral therapy to suppress HIV.

The research team was led by Kristina Allers and Gero Hutter at Charite - University Medicine Berlin.

Commenting on the findings to the Miami Herald, US AIDS researcher Margaret Fischl said the process was too radical for use in the general public, and carries harsh side effects, but showed promise toward developing other cures.

"I would call this a functional cure," Fischl was quoted as saying. "It's on the level and a very remarkable case. But would we do this with an HIV patient? No."

The journal Blood is a publication of the American Society of Hematology.

Savor holiday season the island way at

NICKY
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ARUBA



There is a particularly lovely beach on Aruba with a gorgeous vista right near the airport, known always as Surfside; for some time now the building adjacent to it has gone through a string of owners seeking an appropriate identity for this special place, and it looks like it has finally found it with the opening of the Nikky Beach Club Aruba.

Our investigative team from THE MORNING NEWS went down to have a look at this latest venture, and we found just the kind of authentically tranquil, Caribbean ambiance vacationers seek when

visiting Aruba. New owner Hans and his GM Lub have completely renovated and redesigned the venue to fully showcase this charming location while providing a very reasonably priced menu and bar.

The official arrival of holiday season has a number of company party planners scrambling at the last minute for a venue for their end of the year festivities; if you have a group to small for the larger resorts and are looking for a unique and charming location with an expert gourmet chef, the new Nikky Beach will very

likely come to the rescue. Contact Lub to arrange a customized holiday party for your group to fit your budget, including free-flowing mimosas.

This month they are hosting a number of special public parties on Saturday nights, starting with the 10th anniversary bash of the I LUV MUZIKA group this coming Saturday, December 4, which should be a blast. Until arrival of Christmas there will be more such events, and they will crown their month with a special holiday dinner on December 25 and 26.

Hans and Lub have dubbed Sunday's at Nikky Beach "Rehab Day," when they provide a particularly pleasant ambiance with popular local and international DJ's from noon on and \$3 Mimosas all day long. During the traditional Happy Hour time slot, they feature live music with top local groups specializing in the soft sound of the islands.

When first investigating Nikky Beach we discovered extremely interesting items on the menu at very moderate prices; their chef offers an extensive fusion selection that re-



veals expertise in several notable cuisines coupled with a nice variety that will please everyone's mood. For lunch and snacking you find a varied choice of classic salads, favorite local treats, pastas and gourmet sandwiches. Kitchen is open from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

One last interesting tidbit: Lub explained they offer a customized Departure Day Package that allows vacationer to stow their luggage, enjoy all their amenities, choose a meal, drinks or both and they will personally guarantee getting you to the airport in plenty of time for the flight. Changing

rooms and showers let you swim and beach it until departure time and you can linger without rushing, as the airport is only 2 minutes away; no worries about fighting traffic or delays. "Why should you end your stay on a hurried and harried note?" asks Lub. "You can join us for the day and keep that relaxed island ambiance up to the last minute; it doesn't have to end at check out." The package requires reservations, which can be made by calling 582-0153 or contact them through their website: www.nickybeach-aruba.com.

by Rosalie Klein

Princess wins "The Best Dressed Dog" competition



Judges take their hats off for the tremendous show given by the all the entrants! "The Best Dressed Dog Contest" grand finale at Renaissance Marketplace on Saturday, December 11 was packed with an appreciative audience. Island visitors and residents thoroughly enjoyed the event conducted by well known animal show and website, Bestial and hostess Shohaira Barnes da Silva.

Organizers and masters saw to it that every participant had a sublime outfit for the show, giving details of dress as they models "walked the catwalk" as well as distinctive

characteristics of the canines.

Each proved to be adorable and well-behaved.

Since there was such an enthusiastic response to this year's competition, Shohaira decided to surprise the participants with seven different prizes. Aruba's Miss Teen International, Lynette Do Nascimento, was among the jury members who acknowledged they had a very difficult task in selecting the winners.

Cutest Dress prize went to Punka, Funkiest Dress to Izha, and Funniest Dress was won by Torero. Original Dress winner is Tuffy, and



Creative Dress was taken by Shorry, who also won the Most Popular Dog prize. SETAR N.V., Aruba's national telecommunications company, rewarded Shorry's owners an I-Touch.

Best Dressed Dog was Princess in a cocktail dress full of Swarovski crystals that floated while she strut her stuff; each winner received a basket full of Beneful dog food and gifts courtesy of Bestial Pet House.

Shohaira extends congratulations to all the winners and a special 'thank you' to Compra and Purina, who saw to it that all the participants re-

ceived their Beneful oven baked cookies.

Additional thanks to Tequilla for being super hot on the website and Chicha, the only dachshund.

Dumpy and his phenomenal supports, Shiva and Sultan with their spectacular outfits that left everyone flabbergasted, and to Daisy for a job well done, Cindy with her cute dress and Macho and Honey with their Christmas outfits that brought a smile on everyone's face.

Animal lovers wishing to see the event can do so on December 21 on Tele Aruba at 7:30 p.m.





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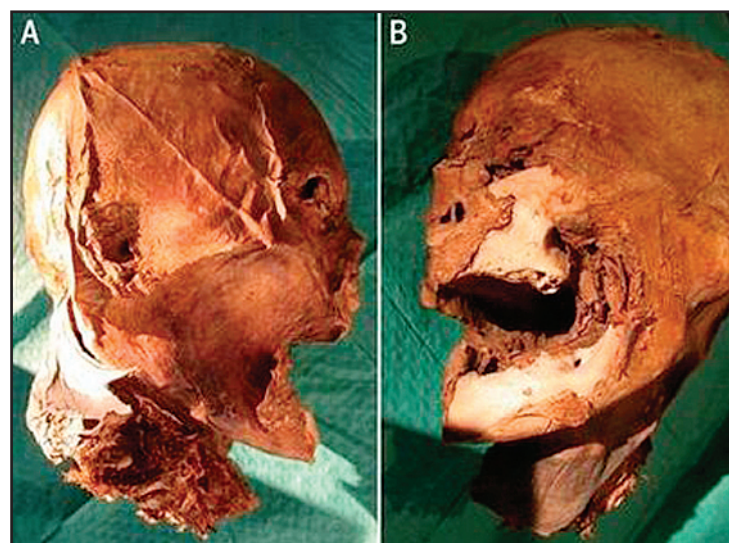


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Embalsmed head of France's King Henri IV found



A two-way combo shows the mummified skull attributed to French King Henri IV in this handout photo

LONDON, England – A team of scientists say they have positively identified an embalmed head, presumed lost in the chaos of the French Revolution, as that of King Henri IV of France who was assassinated in 1610.

The head was apparently lost after revolutionaries desecrated the graves of French kings in the royal basilica of Saint-Denis near Paris in 1793.

Few remains of those bodies have ever been found and positively identified since.

But a team of experts using

advanced scientific techniques say they have conclusively identified the head, passed down over the centuries by private collectors, as that of the monarch.

Charlier said features consistent with those of the king's face were found including "a dark mushroom-like lesion" near the right nostril, a healed facial stab wound and a pierced right earlobe.

The king is known to have sported an earring, along with others from the Valois court

Milano's unveils a new menu



Black Angus Filet Mignon

Milano's, which opened in the South Beach Center in Palm Beach last spring, recently unveiled a new menu and look. The revamped Milano's Italian Bistro & Lounge offers chic décor and an equally chic menu featuring specialties of the chef based on gourmet Italian dishes but fused with the flavors of the Caribbean.

An attractive array of appetizers and entrees presented included Prosciutto with Mango Relish, Shrimp Cognac, Black Angus Filet Mignon and a Rack of Lamb encrusted with Tomato and Almond Salsa. This appealing display was accompanied by a sampling of their special events menu which includes gourmet snacks to tempt the most discerning.

The holiday season is fast approaching, and the cozy surroundings of Milano's offers a very interesting alternative for small groups looking for a venue suited to their size. The bistro has also reworked their menu pricing to present a tab at the end of the evening that affirms patrons' satisfaction.

Gilbert, an award-winning chef, is in charge of the kitchen. His team just claimed the silver award at the October Chef/Student Culinary Competition conducted by Aruba's EPI School. This was judged by celebrity chef Michael Deihl of the East Lake Country Club and President of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Culinary Federation. Gilbert brings his expert touch and passion to Milano's new menu, and the management is very enthusiastic about the change.

The restaurant is open for dinner from 5:30 to 11:00 p.m. nightly; the lounge stays open for late night socializing until 1:00 a.m. on weekdays and 3:00 a.m. on the weekends. It provides an ideal environment for those who enjoy good conversation without have to shout over loud music.

For more information and reservations call 568-7070.



Rack of Lamb with Tomato almond salsa



Prosciutto with Mango Relish



Shrimp Cognac

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Special Occasions

by Rosalie Klein

COMICS

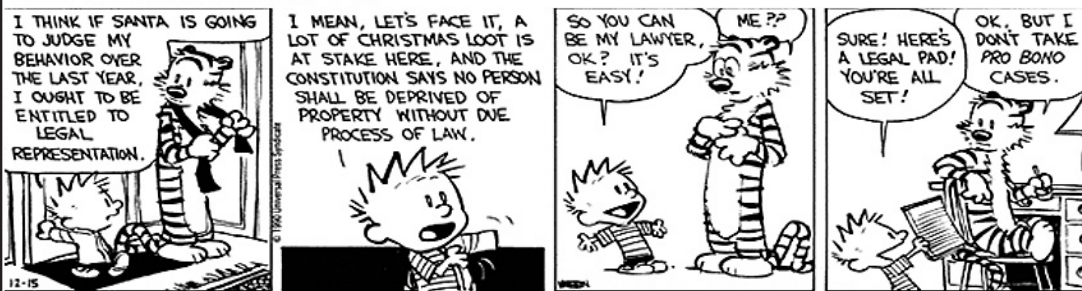
PICKLES



MOMMA



CALVIN and HOBBS



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1. Keen
6. Athletic group
10. Ages
14. Mexican money
19. Light boat
20. Earthen pot
21. Seldomly occurring
22. Ring
23. 5 MANS
27. Waver
28. Require
29. Lessen
30. Gershwin
31. Move
33. Near East chief
35. Drier
38. Droop
41. Tart
43. Elevator man
45. Feeds the fire
49. 4 TANS
54. Seed cover
55. Monica of tennis
56. ___ butter
57. Wool cloth
58. Bundles
60. French summers
62. Latvian
64. Stockwell
65. Manors
68. Misfortunes
70. Competes
72. Parseghian
73. 3 RANS
77. Hanks
80. Attention-attracting call
81. Saarinen
82. Comes out
86. English river
88. Church part
90. Move rapidly
92. Characteristic
93. Ship's leader
95. Peruse
97. Thoughts
100. Korbut
101. 5 IANS
105. Second transaction
106. Clocks' Thomas
107. Central European
108. Upperclassmen: abbr.
109. Bottoms of oceans
112. 6 Across at 56
114. Wise man
116. "___ Loves Me"
119. Heirs
121. Western town
123. Happy
127. 5 CANS
132. Clear the slate
133. Jewish month
134. Metal grating
135. Flower part
136. Female
137. Lease
138. Miss Kett
139. Mournful sound

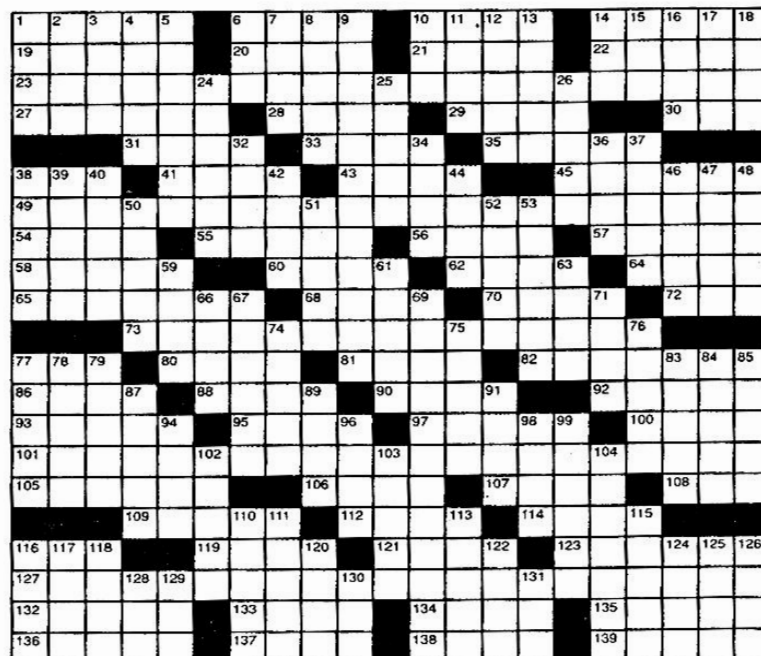
DOWN

1. Gael
2. Despire
3. Poker term
4. Haley book
5. Mexican coins
6. ___ man
7. Spirit
8. French street
9. French maiden
10. Go wrong
11. Anger
12. Places
13. Feel
14. Friend
15. Before, long ago
16. Trucker's rig, for short
17. Wonder
18. Teasdale
24. Jong namesakes
25. Corrects papers
26. Brief
32. Frost
34. Tears
36. Greek letters
37. Lassoed
38. Room
39. Atmospheres
40. Ground grain
42. Carnegie
44. Comedian Mort

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• START THE WORDS •

46. Former country in East Asia
47. Composer Sir Edward ___
48. Italian town
50. Of the jejunum-ecum section
51. Nerve networks
52. Actor Christopher ___
53. Countryman
59. Remain
61. Veered
63. Swarm
66. Thames school
67. Desert
69. Ruler
71. Let it stand
74. Van man
75. Great number
76. Flynn
77. Anteater
78. Sheeplike
79. Shaping forms
83. Aggravates
84. Alpine mountain
85. Male deer
87. Wanderer
89. Consumes
91. Sawbucks
94. Story
96. Consider
98. Comic Roscoe ___
99. Hide from view
102. Della ___
103. Isaac ___
104. Tall stone shaft
110. Conflicting
111. Sarcastic
113. Derisive sound
115. Black
116. Duck
117. Central character
118. Test
120. Look over
122. Leave out
124. Record
125. Latin inclusive abbr.
126. Pickling flavoring
128. "Rose ___ rose ..."
129. Write
130. Painting
131. Ms. Lupino



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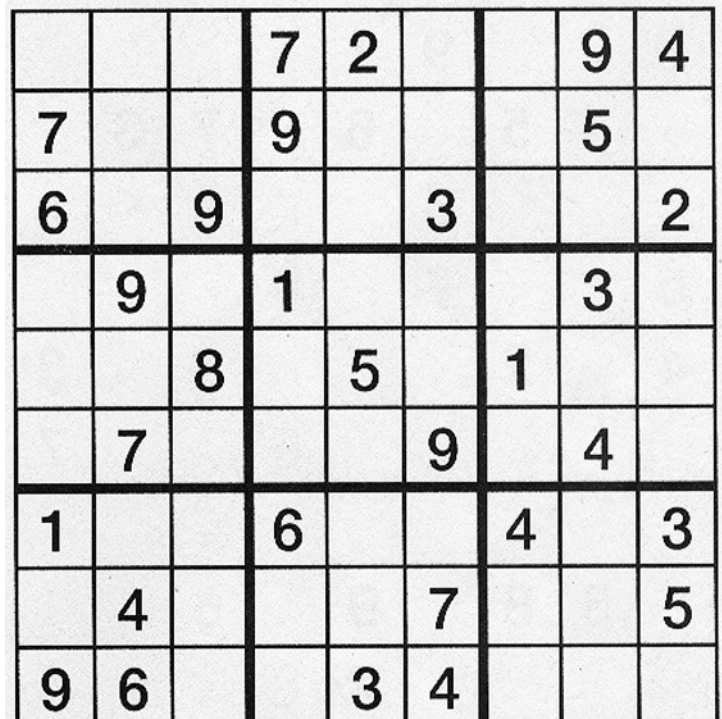
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Sabana Liber 8 in Noord
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

2	1	8	4	9	2	5	9	6
9	9	6	2	1	8	2	4	8
8	2	4	9	6	9	2	1	8
9	4	2	6	8	8	1	2	9
6	2	1	9	9	4	8	8	2
8	8	9	2	2	1	9	6	4
2	8	2	8	4	9	6	1	9
1	9	8	8	9	6	4	2	2
4	6	9	1	2	2	8	9	8

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9. A number is Never repeated in a row or column. In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9.

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TAKORAD, Ghana – Photo shows dancers perform during the ceremony marking Ghanaian first oil production in Tako-radi yesterday. Ghana began production yesterday from one of the largest recent oil discoveries in West Africa, transforming it into a significant producer, but raising fears over the associated risks. President John Atta-Mills flew by helicopter to an oil-processing vessel located at the offshore field and symbolically opened a valve signifying the start of production. (AFP PHOTO)



HOMESTEAD, Florida -- Icicles hang from an avacado as a farmer uses water in an effort to keep the fruit from being damaged by freezing temperatures in Homestead, Florida. South Florida is enduring a weather system that pushed the temperature into the 30s Fahrenheit. (AFP PHOTO)



Photo depicts President of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick. The World Bank fund for the globe's poorest nations said yesterday it had raised a record 49.3 billion dollars (37 billion euros) to help lift 79 states out of poverty through interest-free funds. (AFP PHOTO)

US sues BP, eight others over Gulf oil spill

WASHINGTON (AFP) – The United States filed suit Wednesday against BP and eight other companies for damages stemming from this year's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the worst in US history.

The complaint was filed by the Justice Department with a federal court in New Orleans, where thousands of individuals and small businesses have already filed suit against the oil giant.

Attorney General Eric Holder said the complaint alleges that "violations of safety and operational regulations" caused the April 20 explosion on the Deepwater Horizon rig, which sent nearly five millions of barrels of oil gushing into the Gulf.



"We intend to prove that these violations caused or contributed to the massive oil spill and that the defendants are therefore responsible under the oil pollution act for government removal losses, economic losses, as well as environmental damages."

"We're also seeking civil penalties under the clean water act which prohibits the unauthorized use of oil in the waters," he said, USA

Moody's threatens downgrade over Spain debt crunch

MADRID, Spain (AFP) – Moody's rating agency threatened yesterday to downgrade Spain's credit rating, hammering markets as it warned of a 170-billion-euro refinancing challenge ahead in 2011.

The news came at a bad moment for Spain, battling speculation on world markets that it may slide into a European debt quagmire which has engulfed Greece and Ireland and threatens Portugal.

A rescue for Spain would be far bigger than anything seen to date in Europe: the size of its economy is twice that of Greece, Ireland and Portugal combined.

Moody's Investors Service, which trimmed Spain's sovereign debt rating from top-notch Aaa to Aa1 in September, said it had now put it on review for a further cut.

"However, Spain's substantial funding requirements, not only for the sovereign but also for the regional governments and the banks, make the country susceptible to further episodes of funding stress," said Moody's lead analyst for Spain, Kathrin Muehbronner.

Spain's finance minister vowed to try to persuade the agency to abandon any downgrade, which would further

complicate its efforts to raise money on the markets.

The euro skidded to 1.3314 dollars in evening trade, up slightly after a brief dip below 1.33 but still below the late New York quote of 1.3375.

Shares fell across Europe.

But despite the downgrade warning, the return that investors demand to purchase Spanish debt fell, with the yield on 10-year bonds dropping to 5.449 percent from 5.514 percent on Tuesday.

Moody's blamed three factors for the credit warning: Spain's vulnerability because of high funding needs next year; the risk that banks may need more money than expected to recapitalize; and concerns over Madrid's ability to control spending by semi-autonomous regions.

"However, Moody's also wants to stress that it continues to view Spain as a much stronger credit risk than other stressed euro zone countries," Muehbronner said, adding that Spain's rating would most likely remain in the investment grade "Aa" range.

Moody's estimated Spain may have to raise 170 billion euros from the markets next year, despite government hopes to raise up to 15 billion

euros by partly privatising the national lottery and airport operator.

In addition, Spanish regions needed another 30 billion euros in refinancing in 2011, it said.

A few hours after the Moody's blow, rival agency Fitch Ratings trimmed the credit ratings of the Spanish savings bank federation CECA, citing concerns over liquidity pressure in the sector.

CECA, which provides key financial services to the savings banks and acts as their representative, had its long-term rating and short-term rating cut by one notch. The long-term rating also had a negative outlook.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

PESO	STARE	FATAL	HIO
SORES	HONEY	AGENA	ORE
TURN	THEO	THE	CHEEK
ERASES	TIA	ETATS	EDNA
METE	TEL	SPLOSH	DROIT
DADE	RED	HAIR	ENOUE
MAORI	ICE	OLDE	
AFTERS	SAN	DEPT	ISMS
PRIORI	ARTI	VEE	THAT
AENEAS	BORN	REP	REESE
MOG	LEAD	BY	THE
PLEAD	RUE	HINT	EVANED
EARN	PAC	ERAS	RECURS
REIN	ANTS	NET	PINUPS
NULL	PIE	AMONG	
HATLESS	ACCUSED	ETCH	
ETHAN	HUROKS	ISD	AHAB
STER	GALEN	ETA	ASMARA
TIP	TAKES	OFF	ONES
ERT	ELEME	LUNGE	ALGAE
REE	DERAT	ALIEN	GEES

Ellioti's offers fine Italian cuisine and cozy island ambiance



Adriana and staff



Chef Jeffrey Elliot

Since opening in May of 2009, Ellioti's, located adjacent to the Costa Linda parking lot, has established itself as one of the most popular restaurants in the "low-rise" area. Owner Adriana Sanchez has paid a lot of attention to detail and personally presides over her domain with a welcoming smile and a sincere concern for the satisfaction of her patrons.

The eatery is named for Chef Jeffrey Elliot, who was instrumental in establishing one of Aruba's original and most popular Italian restaurants of days past, Valentino's. He has brought his deft hand to this charming new location, offering a diversity of dishes which has earned it high praise

on a number of Internet review sites such as Tripadvisor and restaurantsaruba.com. "A hidden jewel" effuses one enthusiastic customer, "the best Shrimp Fra Diablo I have ever had!" Another reviewer on Tripadvisor credits Ellioti's with "the best Fettucine Carbonara that I've ever had - and I've eaten at a lot of New York area Italian restaurants."

Ellioti's offers al fresco dining on their charming terrace or air-conditioned comfort in the dining room with the ambiance of a cozy Italian home. Fresh homemade pasta at extremely reasonable prices is their specialty, along with authentic Italian treatment of steak, seafood and fowl. Three nights a week the restaurant features live music from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.; every Tuesday enjoy piano accompaniment to your meal, on Saturdays Gerardo will enchant you with his gentle guitar.

If you enjoy a social evening with friends and good conversation with your meal, Ellioti's extremely tranquil setting is the perfect place to savor fine food and company. Complimentary tram service around the Eagle Beach Resorts will be happy to drop you at their door. Open from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. six days a week, closed on Sunday.

It is recommended you call 588-7329 or 588 9040 ext. 790 to make reservations.



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These fabulous loft apartments are more spacious, with the sleeping area upstairs on the loft. All apartments are completely furnished with cable TV. The open kitchen is very spacious and equipped with stove top, refrigerator, toaster/oven and coffee maker (microwave optional). The apartments are air-conditioned, with daily maid service, private parking and a mini market.

The laundry is accessible to all guests 24 hours a day. There is a large fresh water swimming pool, with a pool deck and beach chairs, where you can relax any time of the day. At the reception, the friendly staff is always ready to attend you with a smile.

Quality Apartments is situated at the Schotlandstraat 70 in Oranjestad. For reservations or information readers may call at tel: (297)-582-0697 or (297)-583-7484, Fax: (297)-583-5203. Office hours are Monday thru Friday: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., on Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Linda's Pancakes and Pizza place, delicious meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner



Plain Pancake

Linda's Pancake and Pizza place, located at Palm Beach 6D, Noord (on the right side of Valero gas station) offers patrons the most delicious Dutch pancakes and pizza's with a Dutch twist.

Open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., and only five minutes away from the high-rise resorts, Linda's is the perfect eatery for the whole family.

Seeing the popularity of this quaint small eatery, THE MORNING NEWS decided it

is just mmm... good. The saté... out of this world!"

Besides the original plain pancake, Linda's specialty is pancakes with walnuts, Brie and honey; pancakes with banana and mango or a Dutch favorite: pancake with apple and bacon.

All their pizzas are made with Dutch Gouda cheese and different toppings making it richer in taste.

When it comes to saté, one has to say that the secret is in



Olguita, Ilhan and Iyanla enjoying a scrumptious meal

was time to find out just how good Linda's really is, by sending out a team of taste testers.

Olgita, joined by her two kids ordered a little of everything while the kids roamed around freely, enjoying the afternoon.

The meal started out with Linda's original plain – to die for – Dutch pancakes, followed by pizza, where instead of using mozzarella Linda has created a unique twist to the traditional Italian dish by using Dutch Gouda cheese. Adding a local favorite which could not stay off the table they also sampled the delicious saté (chicken, pork or beef on a wooden skewer) with peanut sauce (Indonesian influence on local food). For the finish the team (adults only) had one cup of Linda's delicious Espresso.

The team had this to say: "Superb! There are no words to describe just how delicious the pancakes are and the pizza

the sauce. Not everybody can make that perfect peanut sauce, but Linda, being an expert in the kitchen has cooked up one of the finest peanut sauces on the island, making this original Indonesian dish extra special.

If you want a specially prepared pancake or pizza, Linda is right there -- just for you -- in her kitchen.

"For those who are allergic to gluten I have a special pancake mix, gluten free," Linda stated to THE MORNING NEWS team.

Linda's Pancakes and Pizza also offers fried eggs and homemade soups.

"We also serve American coffee," Linda concluded.

With a complete menu, filled with delicious pancakes, pizzas and more, Linda's pancake and Pizza place is the perfect casual restaurant for all in the family.

For more information contact Linda's at 586-3378.

Michael Jackson photos sold at Paris auction



PARIS, France (AFP) – A collection of photo portraits of Michael Jackson, taken in Paris in 1999 as part of an image makeover for the legend, went under the hammer here along with hundreds of snaps from the photo shoot.

The 90 lots brought in 196,000 euros (265,000 dollars) at the sale late Monday, with a large format shot showing the late singer bare-chested and draped in a golden cape fetching the top price of the

evening at 26,000 euros.

The photos were taken by French photographer Arno Bani, in part to illustrate Jackson's 2001 album "Invincible," and were built around four themes -- the blue eye, the silver hand, the red curtain and the golden cape.

But the record company finally used other shots for the album cover and Bani's pictures were shelved for a decade before being put up for sale.

The 12 portraits -- three on each theme -- were sold along with 55 selected pictures from the photo shoot and 31 contact sheets, a total of almost 700 images of the king of pop.

The images had been on display since Saturday at the Salomon de Rothschild mansion in Paris ahead of their sale by auction house Pierre Berge and Associates.

Michael Jackson photos and memorabilia have racked up top prices at auction since his death from cardiac arrest on July 25, 2009, with a portrait by Andy Warhol selling for 812,500 dollars and a glove for 350,000 dollars.

Bani took the shots in a giant studio set up for the occasion in a warehouse near Paris, complete with helipad and access for Jackson's bullet-proof car.

"He gave me complete carte blanche," Bani recalled of the marathon two-day shoot.

"I even asked him to cut his hair, and he agreed."

One of the themes shows Jackson with a glittering blue make-up circle around one



eye, wearing a shiny Yves Saint Laurent dinner suit.

A second shows him in a speckled black polo neck, pulled up to below dark shaded eyes, against a backdrop of multicoloured dots.

Image number three has Jackson standing in front of a red opera curtain, and the fourth shows him wrapped only in a metallic gold cape.



Argentine archbishop slams Santa Claus



BUENOS AIRES, Argentine (AFP) – A Roman Catholic archbishop surprised his parishioners in Argentina by telling the children that Santa Claus was not real, but instead a commercialized symbol of Christmas.

"That's not Christmas," Archbishop Fabriciano Sigampa of the northern city

of Resistencia said in mass, insisting that children should not confuse celebrating the birth of Christ "with a fat man dressed in red."

Sigampa's ire was aroused by plans for a snow covered cabin in the city's main square where a Father Christmas figure would hear children's wishes and receive donated toys to be given out to poor children.

"Surely, in the coming days there will be a deluge of advertisements after they inau-

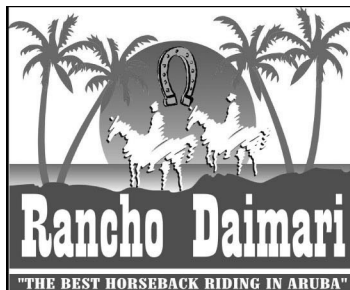
gurate the house where a fat man dressed in red lives. And we should not confuse, we should not confuse Christmas with that."

He said children "should know that, in reality, the gifts come from the efforts of their parents and with the help of Jesus."

After the bishop aired his objections, organizers dropped plans for a Santa and renamed the cabin the "House of Christmas."

Sigampa has attracted controversy before.

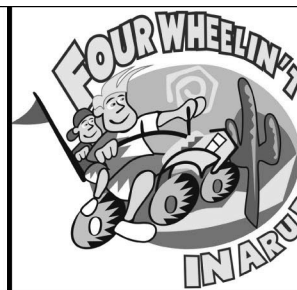
In the 1990s, he caused a stir by ordering a mural for the cathedral of the northern city of La Rioja that showed the Virgin Mary with then president Carlos Menem and members of the Catholic hierarchy.



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Keeping Kirsten may be tough Singh says



Gary Kirsten

CENTURION (AFP) - Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Wednesday praised the contribution of South African coach Gary Kirsten to his team's success but admitted it might be difficult for

India to keep him when his contract expires after the World Cup which ends in early April.

"Gary has been one of the great things that has happened to us," said Dhoni.

Rovers rubbish Maradona reports

LONDON (AFP) - Blackburn Rovers' owners have firmly dismissed reports that Argentina great Diego Maradona might replace the sacked Sam Allardyce as the English Premier League club's manager.

India-based poultry firm Venky's dumped Allardyce on Monday after a weekend loss at north-west rivals Bolton, which left the side 13th in the table and five points above the relegation zone.

Allardyce's exit came less than a month after Venky's purchased Blackburn for 23 million pounds (30 million dollars).

Several names have since been touted to replace him, including Maradona, who

managed his native country at this year's World Cup in South Africa, where Argentina bowed out at the quarter-final stage after a 4-0 loss to Germany.

Anuradha Desai, the chairman of Venky's, was adamant Maradona, who won the World Cup as a player in 1986, was not on his way to Ewood Park.

"There is no connection. This is something from before we got into the EPL -- he knows one of our friends, but nothing beyond that."

"He is not being considered, not now and forever for the future. I can assure you there is nothing we are having to do with Maradona," Desai said.

"We have had a great time under him. It's an advantage for us to have him."

Dhoni said money alone would not be the key factor in whether Kirsten stayed with the world's leading Test team.

"What you need to see is that he has been part of the Indian cricket team for the last three years."

"Gary wants to spend some time with his family, which is the most crucial thing apart from the money aspect. Of course it will be a pleasure to have him in the side but more than the cricketering part it will be the family that will have an impact on his decision."

Dhoni said talks about Kirsten's future had yet to take place.

"We've got a World Cup coming up and it's a discussion that will take place at the right time," he said.

Defendant claims World Cup qualifier fixed

BOCHUM (AFP) - A defendant in the trial of four men accused of match-fixing across Europe claimed on Wednesday that the group bribed a UEFA referee to manipulate the result of a 2010 World Cup qualifier.

The defendant told the court here that Bosnian referee Novo Panic, who has since been banned for life by European football's governing body UEFA, helped fix the result of a qualifier between Liechtenstein and Finland in 2009.

"We manipulated the match by using Novo Panic," defendant Marijo C. told the trial which threatens to tarnish European football.

The defendant did not say whether the bribe was successful during the four-hour

hearing.

The Group 4 game on September 9, 2009 in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, ended in a 1-1 draw as Panic awarded a 73rd-minute penalty to Finland and sent a Liechtenstein player off after the hosts equalised.

Germany went on to win Group 4 and neither team qualified for the 2010 World Cup.

The four men on trial here, whose identification is protected under German law, are accused of fixing 32 football matches in several European countries.

If found guilty they could be jailed for up to 10 years.

The quartet have been in custody since November 2009, when German police made a total of 15 arrests. The trial continues.

Cruyff slams Barca sell-out

MADRID (AFP) - Former Barcelona legend Johan Cruyff on Wednesday slammed the Catalan giants for agreeing a record shirt sponsorship deal worth 30 million euros per season with the Qatar Foundation.

The deal is the biggest ever in the history of shirt sponsorship in football worth 165 million euros until 2016 but the former Dutch superstar believes that it goes against the history of the club's fabled strip.

Cruyff said that by signing the deal, Barcelona whose slogan is "mes que un club" (more than a club) had become "just another club."

"Socially we've made a bad deal," said Cruyff, who is currently coach of the Catalan national team. "There are other solutions rather than sully the jersey."

Barca will place the Qatar Foundation on their shirts alongside the existing logo for UN children's agency UNICEF, which they have sported for the five years while forgoing the riches of commercial sponsors.

Qatar, the tiny energy-rich Gulf Arab country, was

picked by FIFA on December 2 to host the 2022 World Cup and Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola - who played for Qatari outfit Al-Ahli towards the end of his career - acted as one of their ambassadors during the bidding process.

The Qatar Foundation was set up in 1995 by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, to foster

education, scientific research and community development in Qatar, the Middle East and beyond.

Despite success on the field, Barcelona are struggling financially.

The club posted a loss of 79.6 million euros last season -- their first in seven years -- and they have debts of 442 million euros.

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Hot-shot Mueller collects Golden Boot award



(L-R) Herbert Hainer, the adidas Group CEO, Thomas Mueller, adidas Golden Boot Winner, Diego Forlan, adidas Golden Ball Winner, Iker Casillas, adidas Golden Glove Winner and FIFA executive committee member Franz Beckenbauer pose with their FIFA 2010 World Cup adidas Golden Awards during the award ceremony at the adidas headquarters

HERZOGENAURACH (AFP) - Germany midfielder Thomas Mueller has admitted he was a proud man to finally get his hands on the Golden Boot award as the top-scorer from the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

The 21-year-old scored five goals and three assists to finish July's tournament as the top-scorer ahead of fellow hot-shots Spain's David Villa, Dutchman Wesley Sneijder and Uruguay's Diego Forlan.

"Of course, it all happened

because of the team performance in South Africa," said Mueller.

"But it is a bit special to win an individual title.

"It fills me with personal pride to be mentioned in a list with such big names."

Having tasted World Cup success, Mueller says his goals are now to reach the Champions League again with Bayer Munich this season and to help Germany to more success on the international stage.

Oakland, Japanese slugger Matsui finalize \$4.25 mln deal

OAKLAND, California (AFP) - The Oakland Athletics introduced Japanese slugger Hideki Matsui as their new designated hitter after finalizing a one-year, 4.25 million-dollar contract with the free agent.

The A's and Matsui had agreed to terms at the weekend, and the deal went through on Tuesday, after Matsui passed his physical.

Matsui brings a powerful bat to the middle of the Athletics' order, and also provides a veteran presence on a young team.

"We have a regular, professional middle-of-the-lineup hitter we desperately needed," manager Bob Geren said. "He has a combination of power and hits for average and on-base percentage. He can also be a situational hitter."

"We haven't had anybody with his pedigree and experience. He's going to fit in real well."

For his part, Matsui is delighted to be with a team he felt truly wanted him.

"The only thing that I think was the most important factor was they really wanted me to be here, they really pursued me," Matsui said.

The 36-year-old batted .274 with 21 home runs and 84 RBIs last season with the Los Angeles Angels, the Athletics' AL West division rivals.

Matsui spent his first seven major league seasons with the New York Yankees, earning Most Valuable Player honors in the 2009 World Series.

The Athletics are no doubt hoping Matsui's arrival will energize their fan base. He certainly drew a big crowd of media on Tuesday.

"Holy cow!" A's general manager Billy Beane said as



he addressed a throng of reporters -- many of them Japanese -- at Matsui's first Oakland press conference.

"Wow, if I'd known it was going to be like this I would have signed you a long time ago, Hideki," Beane said.



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Jon Fitch feels like he deserves title shot ahead of Jake Shields



BJ Penn and Jon Fitch face off during a UFC 127 Press Conference at Star City in Sydney, Australia

UFC Welterweight standout feels like Shields' challenge for title is a "business decision"

While he is preparing for his upcoming UFC 127 bout against BJ Penn, Jon Fitch is doing some promotion in Australia where the bout takes place and during a recent press conference, the 170-pound star talked about the upcoming bout against Penn as well as his thoughts on Jake Shields passing him by for a shot at the UFC Welterweight Championship;

"I think I'm better than Jake (Shields), I think I should be fighting for the title, but I've been given a huge opportunity here to fight B.J. Penn and that's a big fight, belt or no belt. We're in a sport of selling fights right now, and the

sport's growing, we're trying to get international, trying to get into every country, every household, and part of that is ticket sales is the idea that Jake Shields is coming over from Strikeforce with two belts. I understand that, it's a business decision."

Fitch is currently on a run that has seen him post an incredible 13-1 record inside the Octagon since his debut in 2005 with the only loss in that span coming at UFC 87 against current UFC Welterweight kingpin Georges St. Pierre. Despite the success, UFC President Dana White has often been critical of Fitch's fighting style that has led him to seven straight decision wins, a style that likely led the promotion to choose the highly marketable Shields as GSP's next title contender.

Chinese women smash relay world record

DUBAI (AFP) - The Chinese women's swimming team powered their way to the first world record of the FINA World Short Course Championships here on Wednesday.

Chen Qian, Tang Yi, Liu Jing and Zhu Qianwei surged to victory in the 4x200m freestyle relay in a time of 7:35.94 to cut a massive three seconds off the previous mark set by the Netherlands at the last edition in Manchester two years ago.

Australia claimed silver in 7:37.57 and France the bronze in 7:38.33, meaning not only that the first three were all under the previous world mark, but also that traditional relay powerhouses the United States were ousted from the podium in both the men's and women's relay events.

In the men's 4x100m freestyle relay it was France who just edged out Russia by four hundredths of a second to take the gold in a championship record of 3:04.78 with Brazil taking the bronze in 3:05.74.

"I didn't think we could swim so fast but Yannick (Agnel) was very strong in the last few metres," said Olympic 100m freestyle champion Alain Bernard. "We've been wanting to win this for a very long time. We're satisfied and very happy."

Meanwhile, Mireia Belmonte of Spain claimed two



of the five gold medals on offer on the opening night of competition.

The speedy Spaniard first raced to victory in the 200m butterfly in a championship record time of 2:03.59 and then followed this up with another gold and championship record in the 400 individual medley (4:24.21).

Britain's Jemma Lowe claimed silver in the 200m butterfly in 2:03.94, with Sweden's Petra Granlund bronze in 2:04.38.

In the 400m individual medley, it was 14-year-old Ye Shiwen of China who bagged the silver behind Belmonte in 4:24.55 with her teammate Li Xuanxu taking bronze in 4:29.05.

"Tomorrow I've got the 100m freestyle and the 200m individual medley which will be tough but I'll try my best and see how it goes," she added.

Also looking to add to his medal tally on Thursday will be American Ryan Lochte

after getting his medal quest off to a promising start, with gold in the 200m freestyle.

The long course 200 individual medley world record holder won in a championship record time of 1:41.08, beating his own mark set in the morning's heats, to achieve his 16th World Short Course medal and ninth gold.

Despite all the accolades, the American wasn't thrilled with his performance.

"I wasn't really happy with that because I thought I could go a lot faster. A world record would have been nice, but I guess that wasn't meant to be."

As for missing out on the chance to win eight golds at these championships, due to the United States finishing fourth in the 4x100m freestyle relay, Lochte added: "You win some, you lose some. As long as we were having fun out there, that's all that matters."

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